



PROPOSALS

FOR ESTABLISHING BY SUBSCRIPTION

A PUBLIC GALLERY OF PICTURES IN LONDON,

*The Profits accruing from their EXHIBITION and subsequent SALE
to be divided among the Subscribers.*

THE undersigned JOSEPH COUNT TRUCHSESS, of Zeyl-Wurzach, Grand Dean of the Cathedral of Strasbourg, and Canon of the Metropolitan Chapter of Cologne, proposes this Subscription to be received by Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co., bankers, in Pall-Mall, and to be retained by them until the object proposed is carried into effect, and pledges himself to furnish the Collection of Pictures, which is to compose the said Gallery, to the entire satisfaction of the Subscribers.

It is well known, that his Collection of Pictures, now at Vienna, to which place it was removed for security, holds a distinguished rank among the greatest and most celebrated Galleries in Germany, and consists of more than a thousand original Paintings, divided into the Old, the Flemish, the Dutch, the German, the French, and the Italian Schools, which would fill a suite of ten or eleven apartments; it may be considered rather as the Gallery of a Prince, than of a private Individual, however wealthy. At the same time, it is peculiarly remarkable for the great variety of Masters it possesses, and the happy choice of their works, as well as for the singular freshness and preservation of all the Paintings it contains. Hence the Proprietor may boast, without fear of contradiction, that hundreds of Connoisseurs, intimately acquainted with the most valuable Cabinets in Holland, the numerous Collections of Italy, and the most celebrated Galleries of Dresden, Dusseldorf, Munich, Vienna, &c., have spent hours and days in admiring his Gallery, always expressing their astonishment at the prodigious number of first-rate pictures in every class, as well as at its instructive arrangement, exhibiting all the different Schools, no where else so regularly classed, or forming such a complete whole*.

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* The famous Gallery of Dusseldorf contains in all but 368 paintings. These paintings are very large; it is true; and among them we justly admire 49 of Rubens, 18 of Vandyke, 22 of Vanderwerf. But so many pieces by one master, where the whole number is not great, leaves us to regret the absence of many other classic

It is not surprising therefore, that a Collection of such importance should have been estimated successively by Professors of the Academy of Dusseldorf and Dresden, (exclusive of the subsequent additions made to it,) at upwards of 1500,000 Vienna florins, or 150,000 pounds sterling; and taken altogether, compared with other Collections of a similar kind, it might have been valued much higher. If we admit, that such academical estimates frequently amount to double or triple the prices commonly given, yet, from considering the pieces separately, and valuing them one with another at the rate at which so many other Cabinets have been collected, it is evidently impossible but that a thousand select paintings, many of them in every respect first-rate performances, must be worth, by any calculation, a sum very near the estimate above given, or at least much above the price at which it is offered to the Public in these Proposals.

This very circumstance of the great value of the Collection renders it highly improbable, that any Sovereign in Europe should think of purchasing it all together, in the present state of affairs. Many of these Sovereigns possess Galleries already formed, and consequently would wish to select only a few capital Masters wanting in their Collections; others, confined to the most rigid economy at the recent termination of an expensive war, would not think themselves justified in devoting to a mere object of the Arts such a considerable sum, as the competition of several Sovereigns, and of several private Individuals, would readily furnish. Were such a Gallery then to be dismembered, there can be no doubt but the most advantageous mode of disposing of it would be, to sell it piece by piece, either at the different courts of Germany, in Russia, or elsewhere, as opportunity might offer; and in consequence of the enormous losses Count Truchsess has sustained in his fortune during the thirteen years of the French revolution, though himself a German, he must ultimately determine

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classic masters, generally expected in a Gallery. Accordingly, the Elector Palatine has more than once entertained a design of making exchanges among his different Collections, in order to increase the variety of each.

Besides, we know not yet any other Gallery in existence, in which a satisfactory series of the best painters, born in Germany, or in France, is united in a distinct class; and we need only name here among the latter, a Claude Lorrain, a Nicholas and a Gaspar Poussin, a Moses Valentine, Sebastian Bourdon, Bourguignon, &c., to say nothing of the many other excellent painters of the age of Lewis XIV, to show how interesting such a union of them must be. It is the same with regard to a number of excellent German painters, whom, in other places, for want of a sufficient series, we find arbitrarily confounded with the Dutch and Flemish, or with the Italian.

on this step, and is prompted by a thousand motives soon to announce this Sale, distributing a printed Catalogue, a few months previous to it, throughout all the countries in Europe.

Yet, notwithstanding the determination of Count Truchsess, finally to adopt the measure of selling his pictures separately at the different courts of Germany and of other foreign countries; and persuaded as he is, that he shall thus obtain the largest sum for them; he cannot avoid confessing his regret, not so much at parting with such a valued portion of his property, as at seeing it immediately dismembered and dispersed for ever, without farther examination, without farther use; while he ventures to predict, that every Artist, and every real Connoisseur, who has already seen it, or may see it hereafter, will regret still more than himself the dissolution of a Gallery, the extremely rare classic assortment of which enhanced it's value, and rendered it an object of universal admiration.

Hence the Count cannot willingly forego any hope or apparent probability of seeing his Collection perhaps preserved and kept together; to attain which object he would be contented with a price far below it's real value: and he flatters himself, that his pictures thus sold and removed to London, and there exposed to the view of all the Artists, Amateurs, and Connoisseurs in Great Britain, would soon acquire the importance of a National Establishment of the highest value and utility; while the Subscribers, by fixing the price of admission at the moderate sum of half a crown, would, no doubt, receive a considerable annual profit, beside the interest of their capital; and would always have it in their power, as Proprietors, to sell the pieces separately, whenever it should be found no longer advantageous to keep them thus together, and when they would unquestionably fetch a greater price, in consequence of the more distinguished reputation they would have acquired during the preceding Exhibition.

In the mean time, considering the mere exhibition of them, it may not be superfluous to remind the Subscribers, that no such Establishment exists at present in Great Britain. It is true, that many Noblemen and Gentlemen have purchased pictures at a great expense in Italy, Holland, and other countries: but all these form only private Collections, confined to their own houses, and many of them dispersed through the country at a great distance from the capital. To these houses the Artist, the Amateur, and the Public in general, cannot easily obtain access; and Foreigners, in particular, are so unacquainted with
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them, that many may have resided in London for years, without having seen a single picture belonging to a Collection. We are not speaking here of public Exhibitions, which are but temporary, and too seldom above mediocrity for the able Artist to spend a valuable portion of his time on them, at the uncertainty of being indemnified for his pains and expense. Hence it follows, that the Englishman desirous of instruction is obliged to travel abroad, to see a Gallery of Paintings at Paris, Florence, Dresden, Dusseldorf, &c.: and it is impossible therefore, but that a public Gallery of truly distinguished merit, established in the Capital of Great Britain, and exhibiting a series of more than five hundred Masters of all the different Schools, must excite the highest attention, and, amid a population of above a million, be daily visited by a number of Artists, Amateurs, and Spectators from curiosity; an object of amusement to these, and of infinite utility and study to those.

As to the profit that must arise from such an Establishment, it may easily be estimated to a certain degree of approximation, if we consider the great concourse of people attracted, when a Painter at London announces the Exhibition of a single picture, in some degree interesting; for this may certainly be taken at a hundred fold, when we consider, that the object here is not one picture alone, but ten or eleven rooms together, filled with pictures by the greatest Masters, consequently a vast Gallery, the contents of which it is scarcely possible to run over in three or four hours, much less could it be completely known and thoroughly examined in a single day. Therefore, it is not a simple object of curiosity which is seen once and no more, but a perpetual subject of admiration, study, and consultation, for every Artist and Amateur: and in this view it has been visited at Vienna twenty times following by the same Artists, never weary of returning, and of seeing again, amid such a multitude of pictures, what they had not before seen, examined, and admired in the same degree.

To justify himself in making this eulogium of his Collection to Subscribers, most of whom are yet unacquainted with it, Count Truchsess might simply appeal to the public notoriety it enjoys. The reputation of his Gallery is so well established, that even different travellers, in their works published at Vienna and other places, speak of it with distinguished praise: In the mean time, it may be sufficient to subjoin a copy of the Certificate formally given by the Imperial Academy of fine Arts at Vienna, which will carry with it the more weight, as the Directors and principal Professors, by whom it is signed, are known to

be very circumspect, reserved, and it may almost be said strict to excess, with regard to such declarations*. It is but just, however, that Count Truchsess, while he deposits the Catalogue of his Paintings, with these Proposals, in the hands of Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co., at London, should add testimonies which the British nation cannot suspect of partiality.

With this view he has deemed it incumbent on him, not only to lay before Lord Minto, at that time Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from Great Britain to the Court of Vienna, the valuation of his Gallery made by the Academicians, in which it is estimated, exclusive of two hundred valuable pictures since purchased, at one million five hundred and sixteen thousand Vienna florins; but he likewise takes the liberty of appealing to the judgment of Sir William Hamilton, late British Envoy at the Court of Naples, a distinguished Connoisseur, who during his short stay at Vienna, twice visited the Gallery in question, and expressed the highest satisfaction with it: And he may appeal farther to two British Artists, by whom it was seen at Vienna, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Robert Ker Porter, both now in London, the latter residing at No. 6, Gerrard Street, Soho.

But to remove every doubt from the minds of the Subscribers, that Count Truchsess will make it a point of honour, not only to fulfil their just expectations, but if possible to surpass them, he agrees to receive in the first instance only one third of the sum he demands, to be paid on delivering his Pictures into the hands of the Agent, whom the Subscribers shall appoint to receive them at Vienna; the other two thirds to remain till the pictures shall arrive in

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* COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF THE ACADEMY OF PAINTING AT VIENNA.

Nous sousignés déclarons, attestons et certifions que la Collection des Tableaux appartenante à S. E. Mons. le Comte Joseph Truchsess, Sénéchal héréditaire de l'Empire, réfugiée pour le présent à Vienne en Autriche, composée de plus de mille pièces, forme une de grandes et de plus compkttes Galleries de l'Allemagne; qu'elle offre non seulement dans les Ecoles Italienne, François, et Allemande une quantité de Tableaux pretieux, mais surtout dans les Ecoles Flamande et Hollandois une Suite prodigieuse de differents Maitres avec nombre de leurs Tableaux de la toute première qualité et importance. En foi et temoignage de quoi nous n'avons pas balancé de sous-signer le présent Certificat, fait et dressé ainsi à Vienne le 25 Septembre, 1801.

(L. S.) JOSEPH ROSA,

Directeur de la Gallerie des tableaux
de S. M. I. R. Apostol.

(L. S.) CAVALIERE DE LANPI,

Profess. dell' J. R. Academ. di Pittura
in Vienna.

(L. S.) HENRI FÜGER,

Directeur à l'Academie Imp. Royale des
beaux arts.

FRANCO. CAUCIG, Professore.

HUBERT MAURER, Professor.

England, be seen and examined by a Committee of impartial Connoisseurs requested to meet for the purpose, and be estimated by them to be worth more than the sum demanded.

Having given these explanations, and these assurances, Count Truchsess proceeds to open a Subscription for the space of four months, to commence from the date of the present Proposals; and in favour of those, who shall subscribe during this period, he fixes the price of his Collection, to be transported to London at his own expense, and at his own risk, at the lowest rate possible; at a rate actually below what it will have cost him before it arrives at the place of its destination, notwithstanding the concurrence of the most fortunate circumstances, and thirty years of indefatigable labour, which he has spent in forming it. The sum he thus demands is sixty thousand guineas, divided into six hundred shares of a hundred guineas each. Every Subscriber will have an interest in the whole property, and in the profits arising from it, in proportion to the number of shares taken by him, and as many votes in all the deliberations held, and on all the regulations to be made, for the management, exhibition, or resale of the Pictures. With regard to such of the six hundred shares as shall not be subscribed for within the abovementioned period of four months, they will remain the property of Count Truchsess; who will be at liberty, after the expiration of that term, either to keep them himself, or to sell as many of them as he thinks proper, on his own account, at an advanced price.

Thus it is only in favour of the Subscribers, and to form a ground-work for their association, that Count Truchsess here fixes the price of his Collection, including all the additions made to it, as well as the great expense of carriage and freight from Vienna to London, and all the duties payable both here and on the Continent, at the sum of sixty thousand guineas.* The enlightened Connoisseur will readily conceive, that in setting a value on upwards of a thousand select Paintings, many of them of first-rate merit in every respect, to estimate

* Count Truchsess had formed a plan, according to which, it is true, the price demanded would have been somewhat less, but the Subscribers would have been obliged to take upon themselves all the trouble, expense, and risk of removing the Paintings to London; and the enormous charges, amounting under the most favourable circumstances to four or five thousand guineas, with the vast trouble that must necessarily attend this, are so notorious, that, while thus unlimited in their extent, they would unquestionably have deterred many from subscribing. Besides, Count Truchsess made such important additions and improvements to his Collection last autumn, that it would be impracticable for him to support these two fresh charges, at less than the price above fixed, convinced as he is, that it will be far from indemnifying him for the sums he has already disbursed, and the expenses he will have yet to incur on the occasion.

mate them one with another at sixty guineas is but little; particularly as there are among them single Pictures, which have been estimated at three, four, and even upwards of five thousand guineas, and might produce these sums, if sold, as they are chefs-d'œuvres of the Art, and in some sort invaluable.

But as the present Proposals are addressed not solely to Connoisseurs and Lovers of the Art, but likewise to every person desirous of putting out his money to advantage; many of whom, placing little confidence in such estimations and extraordinary prices, cannot or will not consider at the first view so large a sum as certain, which, in every supposition of the case, necessarily rests on a thousand choice pictures united together; Count Truchsess is willing on their account, to enter into a mercantile calculation, founded on prices so low, that no one will deny that the like are daily paid, in all countries, for pictures beyond doubt infinitely inferiour to these.

Assuredly he takes a very low supposition, if in his Gallery so generally celebrated, and valued seven years ago at a million and a half of florins, or upward of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, he should reckon, calculating the prices they would fetch if sold separately :

50 Pictures, one with another, at 400 guineas each, 20,000 guineas,					
50	—	at 300	-	15,000	
50	—	at 200	-	10,000	
50	—	at 100	-	5,000	
100	—	at 50	-	5,000	
100	—	at 40	-	4,000	
100	—	at 30	-	3,000	
100	—	at 20	-	2,000	
100	—	at 10	-	1,000	
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700			Sum total	65,000	

In this way we have sixty-five thousand guineas for only seven hundred of the Pictures, incontestibly rated at a very low price; and there are above three hundred remaining, not taken into the calculation. Who therefore does not clearly see, that by purchasing them altogether on speculation for the sum of sixty thousand guineas, the Subscribers are not only secure of the capital advanced, and the interest of their money, but even of a considerable profit in addition, in whatever manner the body of Subscribers may afterward think proper to dispose of the Collection?

On the contrary, in asking an inferior sum for a property announced to be of much greater value, Count Truchsess, in order to obviate any prejudice or unpleasant inference to which this might give rise, would be under the necessity of explaining his motives, were they not sufficiently obvious from what has already been said, viz. that after the enormous losses he has experienced during the course of the French revolution, his fortune no longer allows him to keep in his own possession an object of such magnitude and value; and as he has no hope of displaying and making known all the importance of his Gallery, taken together in it's classic arrangement as it is, except in England, a certain number of Associates are indispensably necessary for him, by whose assistance he may obtain the means of clearing himself in Germany, and be enabled to defray the great expense attending it's removal hither, without which his design must be frustrated. At the same time, he is so confident of the considerable profit which may and must arise from it, that he will be well satisfied if no more than two thirds, or even half the number of Subscribers should offer, so that, by two or three hundred shares being left on his hands, he would remain of course one of the principal proprietors.

And in fact it is only about a third of the price fixed, i. e. fifteen or twenty thousand guineas, that Count Truchsess requires; on the receipt of which, the whole of his Collection shall be immediately delivered into the possession of the Proprietors at large. But as he cannot thus deliver it, till he is assured of such a sum, on this account he urgently requests and intreats every Lover of the Arts, inclined to engage in this undertaking, and desirous of accelerating it's execution, to subscribe without delay, sending a note of the number of shares he may choose to take, signed by himself, to the house of Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co., bankers, in Pall Mall.

In the mean time, Count Truchsess requires no money to be advanced by the Subscribers, till they are properly assured, that near a third at least of the whole number of shares will be taken, and that in consequence the plan will certainly be carried into execution; but as soon as a hundred and fifty or two hundred shares are subscribed for, and not before, Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co. will inform the Subscribers of it by circular letters, or by advertisement in the public papers, that they may pay their subscriptions into their bank; and this sum of fifteen or twenty thousand guineas being paid to Count Joseph Truchsess, the seller, at Vienna, he will instantly deliver his whole
Collection,

Collection, containing at least a thousand choice Pictures, into the hands of the Agent of the Subscribers, appointed by them to receive it.*

When Count Truchsess declares, that he will deliver his Collection to the Agent of the Subscribers, and that he will besides defray all the expense of carriage, freight, and duties, while he, uncertain of the rest, shall have received but a third of the whole sum demanded, it is to be understood of course, as a matter of equity, that the Count does not relinquish his co-proprietorship, and his right of co-inspection and co-direction over the Paintings thus delivered; but that he retains for himself and his heirs, so many shares as shall not have been subscribed and paid for at the time; that is to say, when Count Truchsess receives the third of the sixty thousand guineas, he will deliver his Pictures into the hands of the Agent appointed, to have thenceforward the keeping and management of them jointly with him. It is by mutual consent, that they will take the most proper, most safe, and least expensive measures, for packing them up, and conveying them to London. However, that no one of the Subscribers, by whom the first third of the sum is advanced, may have any anxiety, or risk, on account of his money paid, Count Truchsess, charged alone with the expense of the conveyance, solemnly pledges himself to spare no cost or pains that human foresight can suggest, for the safety of it; he also engages to insure it against loss at sea to the amount of the sum demanded; that, should it unfortunately meet with any fatal accident in the passage, neither he nor the Subscribers may lose their capital, but, however such an event might be regretted on account of the Arts, be repaid the money they had advanced.

By entering into these engagements, Count Truchsess flatters himself he shall have removed every possibility of mistrust, and laid the surest foundation of an entire confidence in his Proposals. No one of the Subscribers, it is evident, engages himself at an uncertainty, or merely on the faith of the testimonies and certificates here adduced, irrefragable as they are; his perfect security

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* It is to be noted here, that Count Truchsess having already sent some of his Pictures to London, and some other Pictures belonging to him being at present at Dresden, all these Pictures are to be included among the number to be delivered, so far as they are found of sufficient excellence to be admitted into the Classical Selection to be made on the occasion. By Classical Selection is to be understood the completing as far as possible the grand series and variety of Masters of every School; and in this sense many Pictures that would not be chosen for a Cabinet, are, notwithstanding, extremely valuable in a Gallery.

arises from the engagements entered into in these Proposals themselves, independent of every foreign opinion. The Subscriber pays only as he receives; and though the first hundred and fifty or two hundred Subscribers pay their money before the Pictures have reached England, yet this money will not be delivered into the hands of the Seller at Vienna, till the Collection has been examined by their Agent, who will form a judgement of it's worth, and giving his order for the payment, will immediately receive the whole Gallery, of an evidently greater value, as a security.

There remains but one farther difficulty, and this arises entirely from the Subscribers themselves, that of the almost insurmountable trouble and perplexity, which would attend collecting individually in the first instance the votes of so many Subscribers, residing in different places, for determining jointly on the choice of a skilful and trusty Agent, to go to Vienna in their behalf, there to see and receive the Paintings in question. For this reason Count Truchsess requests the Subscribers, to leave this care entirely to the well-known house of Ransom, Morland, and Co. with the advice of some of the principal Subscribers, Count Truchsess alone being deemed responsible for every thing that regards the individual value of the Pictures.

This responsibility Count Truchsess takes on himself alone; for what banker in London, unacquainted with the Pictures in question, or what Agent sent by him to take charge of them, were he the most skilful Connoisseur in the world, would be responsible, on his own single judgment, to so many different Subscribers, for upward of a thousand Paintings being worth this or that exact sum? This examination and valuation in detail will be afterward made in London itself; and it is evidently for the interest of Count Truchsess, that, conformably to the engagement into which he here enters, the valuation of his Pictures should greatly exceed the sixty thousand guineas he demands. He will have received but one third of this sum, when he delivers up his Pictures as a security for it; and if, on their arrival in London, and valuation by skilful and impartial persons, chosen by both parties, they should be estimated at less than the sum specified, he is not entitled to take more Subscriptions than the estimate will fully cover. What risk, then, can the Subscribers incur?* Suppose the Gallery

* To remove every cause of dispute or dissatisfaction, it is proper to settle the grounds on which the estimate should be made. Count Truchsess certainly does not expect that the persons thus chosen by both parties should

lery in question, brought to London free of all expence, should then be estimated, by a just and equitable valuation, altogether at no more than twenty thousand guineas, so much the worse for the Seller alone: it would then belong, at this price, to the few Subscribers who had paid the first two hundred shares; as any other Subscription that had been taken in the mean time, not having been paid, is by this circumstance rendered void. Count Truchsess even offers to refund a proportional part of the first fifteen or twenty thousand guineas received, could it possibly be determined that his Pictures were not worth the sum advanced; but this supposition is inadmissible, since, were they of so little value, the Connoisseur sent to see and receive them at Vienna, would not have agreed to the purchase, and, consequently, would have refused the payment of this first sum. However, it would be ridiculous to conceive such a circumstance possible, when the object in question is one of the grand Galleries of Germany, sufficiently known to be of the highest value and importance, with regard both to the number and quality of its Paintings; in short, a Gallery of immense extent, constantly frequented on these accounts by the greatest Artists and Connoisseurs wherever it has yet been, and deserving to be so wherever it may yet happen to come.

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should adopt the highest prices of the Art, according to which many of the Pictures, from their intrinsic merit, or on considering the few works existing of the Master, may be termed in some sort inestimable; at the same time he equally protests against taking as a standard such accidental prices, as, though they may have occurred now and then, are no less exceptions from the general rule, and would give on the contrary a value far below the real worth. In the same manner, when a Picture truly valuable, having appeared extremely dirty and defaced on its exhibition, has fetched on sale but a third or fourth part of the sum that has been offered to the purchaser almost immediately after, this may likewise be termed an accidental price. But the true value of the Paintings evidently ought to be estimated by comparison and analogy with the prices at which similar Pictures have been frequently purchased, for the great Collections and celebrated Cabinets of this country, after they had obtained sufficient reputation and notoriety in the eyes of Connoisseurs. It would be in the same manner capricious and unjust, to degrade the real value of a Picture, by objecting that it is by a Master scarcely known, and consequently not enquired after in England: for, in this view, half the Gallery of Dresden would be rejected, and many a private Amateur would find this picture too large to suit his taste or his collection, and that too little known, or not sufficiently pleasing, for his little Cabinet. Yet the Dresden Gallery would not enjoy the reputation it does, were any of these Masters wanting in it; and the subject of the present Proposals is like it, a grand Gallery, which has been particularly admired for exhibiting, in its classical arrangement, at least two hundred different Masters more than that of Dresden. It must be remembered, however, that Count Tuschess desires this valuation only to prove to the Subscribers the true worth of what they have bought; the price of their purchase being limited to 60,000 guineas, it will make no difference to them, should the valuation amount to double or triple the sum; but it would be a real loss and injustice to the Count should his Pictures be so under-valued as to diminish the sum he would still have to receive.

Having mentioned the vast extent of the Collection, possibly it's very magnitude might deter some Amateurs from subscribing, through apprehension of the trouble, difficulty, and expense, commonly attending so large an Exhibition. In fact, it will be necessary to have ten or eleven apartments for it: And it is known, that the Orleans' Gallery, though brought to London in two different parts, was obliged to be exhibited in several places, thus occasioning a great addition of expense, as separate persons to take care of it, and attendants, were necessary at every place. For this reason Count Truchsess thinks it incumbent on him to say, that as soon as near two hundred shares are taken, so as to render the arrival of the Collection no longer a matter of uncertainty, and the Subscribers for them will only answer for two year's rent, at a reasonable rate, he has persons ready, who will engage to furnish, in an advantageous situation, a place so adapted to their Exhibition, as no Gallery at present existing in the world can boast of. The plans of this place will be laid before the Subscribers to the first two hundred shares, and they will frame such resolutions, in the name of the whole body, as are necessarily urgent, that the place may be put in order, and ready for the reception of the Pictures, before the middle of next winter. This, however, need not alarm any of those who are in the habit of keeping Exhibition Rooms; for the place in question being subsequently intended for a different purpose, it is, perhaps, solely for the Collection of Count Truchsess, and till this is otherwise disposed of, that it will be employed as a temporary Public Gallery.

The subscription for the first two hundred shares is urgent in another point of view, before the Nobility and Gentry leave London, and go into the country. As the time that will be required for the journey of their Agent to Vienna, the packing up of a thousand pictures, their carriage all the way from Vienna, and their subsequent conveyance across the sea, if possible before the end of next autumn, added to what must necessarily be spent in putting up such a Collection, will occupy at least six months, and possibly more: Should these subscriptions be deferred till people return to town, as nothing can be done towards the removal of the Collection during the winter, there will be a loss not of these six months merely, but of twelve, or rather eighteen, before the Pictures could arrive in London, and be put into the hands of the Subscribers. It must be observed, likewise, that should Count Truchsess find nothing effectually done toward the Subscription he proposes, before the period when persons of Fashion and Fortune usually leave town, considering his hopes as abortive,

tive, he will feel himself under the necessity of withdrawing his present Proposals, and of recurring to other steps for the disposal of his Pictures at different Courts, where some partial negotiations for this purpose have already been begun.

Still Count Truchsess is aware, that the Subscribers for the first two hundred shares, as they will have to advance their money three or four months before the subsequent Subscribers, may expect some particular advantage on this account: and as this cannot be given them in the property of the Collection, on which every share has an equal claim, without prejudice to the rest of the Subscribers, he offers them beside their decisive influence in the primary regulations already mentioned, a permanent advantage with regard to votes, by allotting an additional vote to every five shares of the first two hundred; that is to say, the holders of these shares shall have two hundred and forty votes among them instead of two hundred, which will be of no little weight in the subsequent deliberations for the keeping or resale of the Collection. Should the business ultimately terminate in a division of the Pictures among the Subscribers, in this single case, no doubt, the holder of every share should have an equal voice on the mode of making the distribution. But every difference or misunderstanding, that could arise on this head among the Subscribers, it is conceived, would be obviated by adopting the method of a private auction among themselves, or even of a public one: For no one of the Subscribers would have reason to fear the enhancement of price, to which he might be liable in this case; as the rest would be in a similar situation with himself, and all additions of price would only augment the sum to be divided, in which he would share; so that it is most probable every one would receive a compensation indirectly, for whatever he might imagine he had paid too much for this or that piece that might suit him.

In the mean time Count Truchsess flatters himself, he shall afford some satisfaction to the Lovers of the Arts, by previously bringing forty or fifty of his Pictures to London; not taken from his Gallery at Vienna, which still remains there entire; but Pictures subsequently purchased, and designed, with one or two hundred others, to increase it's variety. A dozen or more of the principal among these (the rest, of inferior consequence, being added to them simply to fill a room) will serve at least to show what kind of a Collector Count Truchsess is, and what may be expected from his Gallery, when he speaks alternately of classical Pictures, chosen Pictures, and Pictures of first-

rate Merit. Perhaps the Artists, Connoisseurs, and Amateurs of this country; to whom the Count will take pleasure in showing this feeble specimen of what he has collected, as soon as the whole of it has arrived and is put up, will allow more than one of the pieces, taken in their kind, and relative to the Masters by whom they were painted, to rank in the first Order. Should it appear, that there are among them some Pictures by Masters not generally known in this country, or totally unknown here, the Proprietor would not be sorry, as they would tend indirectly to prove how interesting the series of them must be in a grand Gallery: But it is a matter of regret to him, that only five or six Paintings, by Italian Masters, are among those that are now on their way to England; yet, small as this number is, Count Truchsess cannot avoid mentioning among them, beside an exquisite composition of Corregio, two such capital paintings by Domenichino, that Italy itself can scarcely furnish two more important by the hand of this very scarce Master, and, perhaps, none so highly finished, still less so well preserved in all the freshness of their original colouring, as these. It is particularly to see these two Paintings that Count Truchsess invites the Artist and Connoisseur; and he hopes they will afford the same pleasure here, as they did during five months at Dresden to all the Connoisseurs in that capital.

To those who are not equally skilled, however, it may be proper to observe, that most of these few Paintings that will be shewn to them, have not even simple gilt frames; and being thus destitute of ornament, perhaps it may be said disfigured by plain wooden borders; no wonder if in this state, and in no connected series or arrangement, they do not display all the beauty and value which they intrinsically possess. To many likewise it may appear scarcely worth their while, to have come to see only five or six pictures, in this or that style, calculated to please their taste: and, to say the truth, even to the Artist and the profound Connoisseur, it is by no means equally interesting, to see this small number first offered to his view, and to see hereafter two or three hundred Pictures of first-rate merit in one series, all arranged according to their respective Schools, surrounded with so many other Masters, whose different styles serve mutually to display each other to advantage. This is the distinguishing characteristic, the merit, and the utility of a grand Gallery; a thing which has never yet been formed in England, rich as it is in detached Paintings: and this is what Count Truchsess offers in his Collection, persuaded as he is,

that,

that, after having been some time exposed to public view, it cannot fail to excite a general wish, not only of seeing it kept for ever as a National Establishment, but of having it still more and more enlarged and diversified; an ample scope for which offers itself here in the possibility of making exchanges. But all this is the business, and depends on the will, of the Subscribers, who will become the Proprietors of it.

In conclusion, Count Truchsess has only to observe, that such another opportunity perhaps will never again occur throughout the world, to purchase and acquire at such a price one of the largest and most complete Galleries of Paintings. The sight of it alone, however, can give conviction of its importance; and for this reason Count Truchsess has not thought it advisable at present to add a printed Catalogue of his Pictures to the present Proposals. A manuscript Catalogue indeed is left for examination with Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co's, in Pall Mall: But to read a pompous list of the greatest Masters can answer little purpose, while the Paintings are more than five hundred miles off; and it may be questioned, till they are seen, whether they be the performances of those Masters or not. Besides the mention of some names, were it in the first Gallery in the world, might prove an inexhaustible source of disputes, which Count Truchsess is desirous by all possible means to avoid. It is sufficient for him, that the small number of his Pictures, the names of the Painters of which may be questioned, are not the less originals of great merit; that all the others are undoubtedly by the Masters to whom they are ascribed, Masters desirable in a Collection; and that the whole together forms one of the most complete and distinguished public Galleries, in the eyes of every Connoisseur, of value far surpassing the price he asks. For this Count Truchsess conceives he may solemnly pledge himself in subscribing the present Proposals. It remains, therefore, with the Lovers and Patrons of the Arts in England, and with every other Englishman attached to his country, to decide whether they will enrich the capital of it with a Treasure of Art, as valuable and useful to the Public, as profitable to themselves individually, and accelerate its arrival by their speedy Subscription.

JOSEPH COUNT TRUCSSESS,

London, May the 15th, 1802.

Of ZEYL WURZACH, GRAND DEAN of the
CATHEDRAL CHURCH of STRASBOURG, and
CANON of the CHAPTER of COLOGNE.

Form of Subscription.

I, whose name is undersigned, hereby declare, that I take one (two, three, or more) share (or shares), at one hundred guineas (each), in the purchase of the Collection of Pictures of Count Joseph Truchsess, at Vienna, in Austria, according to the tenour of the conditions announced by him in his Proposals of the date of the 15th of May, 1802; and I hereby engage, to pay the amount of this my subscription into the hands of Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co., Bankers, in Pall Mall, London, as soon as they shall inform me, by a circular letter, or by the public papers, that near a third of the shares is subscribed for. I likewise request and empower Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co., to appoint a skilful Agent to be sent to Vienna; to pay the money as agreed, and take the necessary steps for receiving the said Collection: and when it is arrived in London, and a meeting of the Subscribers is called, in case of my absence, I request and empower N. N. Esq., (Professor, Fellow, Associate of the Royal Academy, or as the case may be) to vote for me, as my Praxy, in such farther arrangements and regulations as may be proposed.

In Witness whereof I hereunto set my Hand,

No. , Street, Square,
London, the , 1802.

M. M.

N. B. If several persons should think proper to join in a Share, they will make such alterations in the above Form as will be necessary: as, We, whose names are undersigned, declare that we take jointly one share, &c.

Subscribers will be particular in giving their address; and in case of a joint subscription, the address of one of the Subscribers, who will act for the rest, will be sufficient.

It seems not necessary for the Subscription Notes, to express more particularly the conditions, referuations, &c.; since it is presumed, that, the words, "According to the Tenour of the Conditions, &c.," are sufficient to include all the clauses necessary for the security of both parties.

It may be proper to observe, however, that each note must be on a ten shilling stamp.

* * The present Proposals may be had gratis at Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co's, Bankers, and at Mr. Bryant's Pall Mall; as may Tickets of Admission to see the small number of his Pictures, which will be put up at No. 46, Compton Street, Soho. He only requests all persons who may go to view them, to leave a card with their names, that he may not unnecessarily send them a particular invitation, and that he may at least be informed of those who have already made use of their Tickets. At the same time he begs leave to observe, that his invitation is general to all the Artists, Connoisseurs, and Lovers of the Arts in London.

